

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 12830 311733Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/058 W

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R 311306Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8075

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FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO DACCA FOR YOU INFO

FM CALCUTTA AUG 31X76

QTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CALCUTTA 2136

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BG, IN

SUBJ: NAXRUL ISLAM'S DEATH: LOVE AND HATE BETWEEN THE TWO BENGALS

1. DEATH OF BENGALI MOSLEM POET KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM IN DACCA AUGUST 29 WAS MAJOR NEWS IN CALCUTTA. CHIEF MINISTER RAY AND A HOST OF DIGNITARIES AND LUMINARIES FROM THE CALCUTTA LITERARY WORLD ASSEMBLED AT TAGORE AUDITORIUM AFTERNOON AUGUST 30 TO PAY HOMAGE TO ISLAM, AND THE PAPERS AUGUST 30 ARE REplete WITH TRIBUTE TO THE POET. ALMOST ALL CAST ISLAM AS A SYMBOL OF THE SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL UNITY OF THE TWO BENGALS AND EMPHASIZE THAT WHILE HE WAS MOSLEM HE WAS MARRIED TO A HINDU, STUDIES SANSKRIT AND HAD CLOSE TIES WITH THE HINDU COMMUNITY.

2. IF THE OVERALL THEME WAS ALL-BENGAL UNITY, THE MAIN SUB-THEME WAS ONE OF DISTINCT IRRITATION TOWARD BANGLADESH. SEVERAL PAPERS REPORT THAT ISLAM "DIED AN INDIAN", I.E. THAT HE HAD RETAINED INDIAN CITIZENSHIP AND SPIRITUALLY FELT HIMSELF MORE INDIAN THAN BANGLADESHI. IN A TONE OF MORAL OUTRAGE PAPERS REPORT THAT ISLAM'S SON SABYMAACHI, WHO LIVES IN CALCUTTA, WENT TO DACCA

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AUGUST 29 ON HEARING OF HIS FATHER'S DEATH, ONLY TO FIND THAT

HIS FATHER HAD ALREADY BEEN BURIED. "WE WERE SIMPLY STUNNED AT THE TREATMENT METED OUT TO US BY THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT", SABYASACHI REPORTEDLY SAID ON RETURNING TO CALCUTTA AUGUST 30. APPARENTLY SABYASACHI HAD HOPED TO BRING HIS FATHER'S REMAINS BACK TO CALCUTTA BUT WAS REFUSED PERMISSION BY BANGLADESH AUTHORITIES.

3. IN ANOTHER INDIRECT SLAP AT BANGLADESH GOVT, CONGRESS-AFFILIATED AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA AND JUGANTAR AUGUST 31 CARRY ARTICLES ON THE JSD. PAPERS REPORT THAT JSD IS NOW DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS, ONE WHICH SEEKS THE GOVERNMENT'S PERMISSION TO FUNCTION OPENLY IN THE POLITICAL ARENA AND THE OTHER WHICH IS DETERMINED TO PURSUE ARMED STRUGGLE AGAINST THE CURRENT REGIME. PAPERS RECALL EXECUTION OF COLONEL ABU TAHER AND ARREST OF VARIOUS JSD LEADERS BUT REPORTS THAT "AS SOON AS THE JUDGEMENT OF THE SPECIAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL WAS PASSED, CLASHES WERE REPORTED IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF BANGLADESH BETWEEN THE ARMY AND JSD WORKERS. THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO DISARM THE JSD WORKERS HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ARTISTS, DEATHS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NEWDE12830
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760330-1175
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976083/aaaaaccc.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 JUN 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <04 OCT 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAXRUL ISLAM'S DEATH: LOVE AND HATE BETWEEN THE TWO BENGALS
TAGS: PFOR, BG, IN, (ISLAM, KAZI NAZRUL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006